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Few believe their strengths are used in the workplace

4 minutes



PDT managing director Paul Findlay.

A Professional Development Training survey has found almost half of Australians do not believe their strengths are used in the workplace. While nine in 10 workers feel their skills are engaged, 24 per cent are planning to leave soon or within 12 months, it says. Regular change in the workplace, feeling under-appreciated and whether an organisation is optimistic or pessimistic influence workers' decision to stay or move.

PDT managing director **Paul Findlay** says the survey highlights the importance of employees having their strengths recognised to

develop them to their full potential.

“When people use their strengths, they feel happier, more confident, more resilient, and are generally more proactive and productive,” Findlay says.

PDT’s Oranges workplace wellness program teaches staff about strengths, optimism, resilience and gratitude.

“Showing employees how the brain, body and emotions are linked, and providing activities to boost positive mood and manage negative emotions, can improve resilience. Ultimately, that is critical to organisational success,” he says.

TRAINING FOR LIFE

Almost half of Australia’s mid-level managers say the training and development they receive has decreased from their early career years. A Hays survey suggests of the 1515 Australian and New Zealand employees and employers surveyed, only 18 per cent found training and development increased by mid-level management.

Managing director **Nick Deligiannis** says learning and development should feature throughout a career.

Deligiannis says ongoing training could include giving middle managers the opportunity to manage senior-level projects; participating in offsite meetings to work on the business rather than in the business; and a net number of formal annual training days.

“By being included in more senior-level business discussions and receiving the opportunity to contribute ideas, middle managers can experience rapid on-the-job growth,” he says.

SKILLS BARRIER

Businesses are not doing enough to empower workers with the skills needed to succeed in the technological age, with motivation to upskill diminishing as employees age.

A survey by information and communication technology consultants Ajilon found more than a third of respondents said there was a shortfall in ongoing training and development resources, leading to a barrier in adapting to tech changes.

Respondents also said there was a lack of focus on tech skills and almost one in five senior managers did not understand the importance of embracing tech. Interest in upskilling fell as the ages of respondents increased, with gen Y the likeliest to upskill, followed by gen X.

National staffing manager **Rod Crozier** says the pace of tech change has been unprecedented and transformational. “To remain relevant, workers must continually upskill themselves,” he says. “Businesses must also play a part by providing the right resources and tools to empower employees with the skills needed to thrive in an era where intelligent robots are rapidly redefining traditional roles.”

ANTI-BULLY PROGRAM

McDonald’s Australia is partnering with the Alannah and Madeline Foundation to rollout an eSmart program to help ensure young people are not exposed to workplace bullying.

Chief operating officer **Shaun Ruming** says McDonald’s is aiming to improve wellbeing through reducing and responding effectively to online and offline bullying and other forms of negative behaviour.